

" they were and are of the earth and they had returned. i miss them and think of them every single day of my life but i know deep in my heart that they are also completing a cycle.

you know, i don't think that every day. some days i am filled with hatred. i dream, i fantasize of all that i could and should have done to that person, to that killer, that murderer. i berate myself for not being there to defend them, i have wailed and cried and thrown myself upon the mound of dirt that caresses their flesh and have howled. i have howled until my throat was raw, until i could hardly breathe.

i stayed in that place for a long time. alone. i needed so much to be alone and i never felt truly lonely. i was not with others of my kin or kind but i was with this panoply of beings. i was connected and nurtured. i gave back, in a small way, the only way i could and everyday i apologized to my surroundings for the feeling that i was taking more than i gave, that i was learning but unable to teach. but i grew. and the only tears that ever came to me were those that i shed from the past, from the scars of civilization, from the need to exorcise the consumptive, consuming ways that we had all lived."

- clayton j. elliot, *return*



WARBOUND

warbound #3

summer 2008

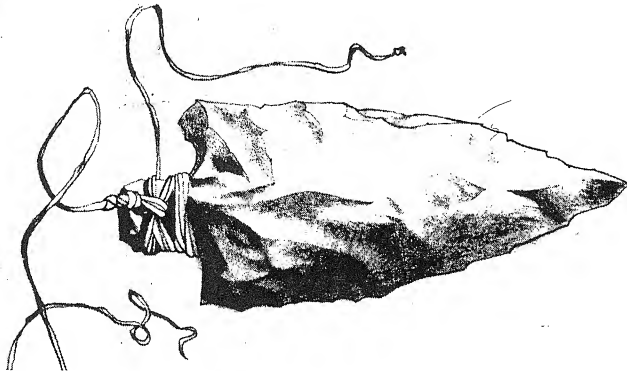
unless noted, authorship belongs to the editor, who can in theory be reached via email at deloslobos@wildmail.com. in practice, its best to seek real interactions with your community and leave this curmudgeonly doomsayer to his own desires.

the meaning of the word

warbound

is two-fold: to be on the unstoppable path to confrontation, and to be sworn to both your fellow warriors and to that which you are fighting for - to leave battle only in death. i find that a suitable metaphor for the kind of responsibility we must take on if we are to end domestications assault against all that is wild.

do not think, however, that i am so deluded (or qualified) as to present the reader with a strategem or manifesto for our struggle. i wish to speak for only myself, one among legions of lost children. i seek to enthuse and rejuvenate the battle-weary and shell-shocked of which so many of us are. this is merely the simple prose which i share as i scream at the top of my lungs, in order to incite and instigate. this is my offering, my warsong.



on the cover: barred owl. owls were thought by romans, mayans, and other civilized people to be frightful omens, funerary symbols for the city dwellers, whilst many indigenous cultures revere and respect the owl as a carrier of elder spirits. great winged messenger of death, let your call herald the destruction of civilization!

We've strayed for so long now that we've forgotten what home looks like.

We look to machines, consumable comforts, and a network of digital alienation, to a grid of concrete and steel, actors, politicians, and ministers. We lie in the center of a simulated, created world looking for more ways to sustain what we've been sold as pleasure. But the problem is old enough that we can't see it for what it is: 10,000 years of civilization.

It has fallen and re-grown only to conquer itself again. It has an unending hunger and need for growth that no society has been able to tame or redirect. It's driven by a need that cannot be tamed or redirected.

But it hasn't always been this way. We've spent millions of years living in nomadic bands of gatherer-hunters. That is a world without politics and warfare, sexism and racism, ecological destruction and social stratification. As humans, we've adapted for this. As animals, we've lived within our own means and the means of our bioregions.

Then, somewhere, somehow, things changed. It began with the settling of the wanderers and the domestication of plants and animals. And it grew: Not by a choice, not consciously, but by force. Rise and fall, grow and expand: through war, systemic violence and inequality, enslavement and profit. And now we're entangled in its final woes. The beast of Leviathan has grown into a global, techno-industrial Megamachine, and it can grow no more.

We face the end of oil. We face the end of cheap energy. We face the ends of the Earth.

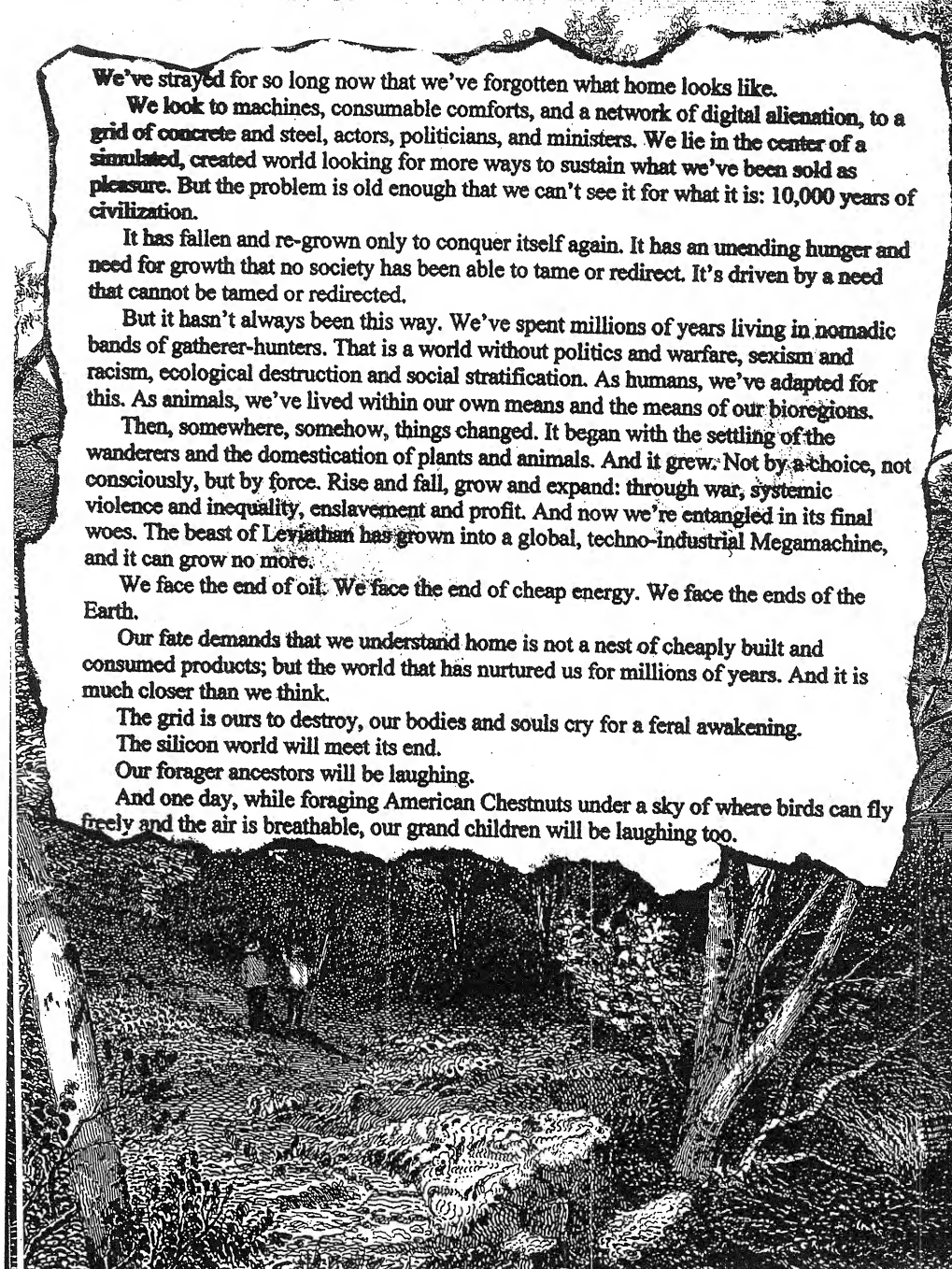
Our fate demands that we understand home is not a nest of cheaply built and consumed products; but the world that has nurtured us for millions of years. And it is much closer than we think.

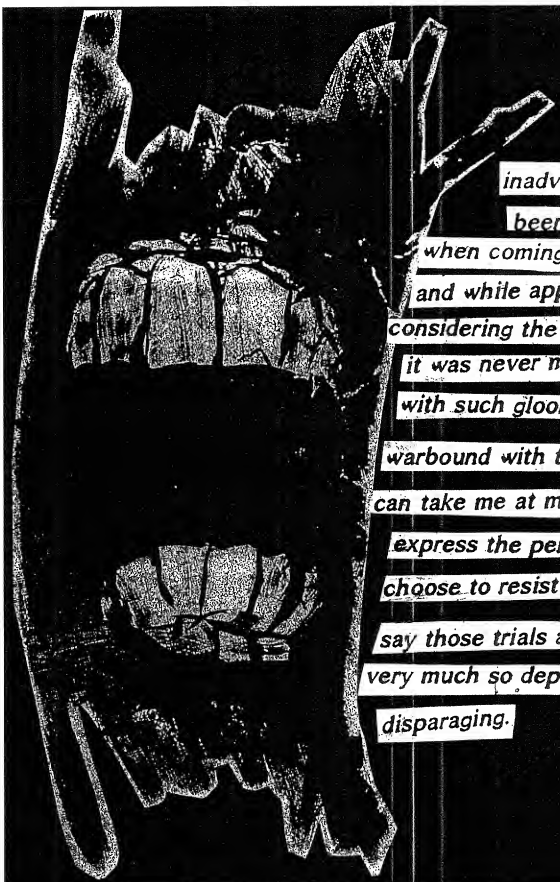
The grid is ours to destroy, our bodies and souls cry for a feral awakening.

The silicon world will meet its end.

Our forager ancestors will be laughing.

And one day, while foraging American Chestnuts under a sky of where birds can fly freely and the air is breathable, our grand children will be laughing too.





a note for my readers:

inadvertently, the theme for this issue has been death, a rather depressing subject when coming from the perspective of the civilized. and while appropriate enough, i suppose, considering the morose condition we are currently in, it was never my intention to overwhelm my reader with such gloomy invocations. however, i present warbound with the utmost sincerity, and i hope you can take me at my word for this. warbound is meant to express the personal struggles those of us who choose to resist civilization encounter, and needless to say those trials and tribulations abound and are indeed very much so depressing, disempowering, and disparaging.

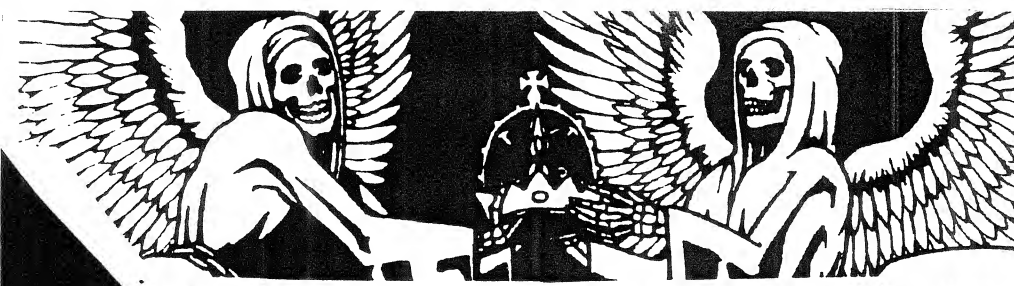
i believe that there is a great difference between something affecting you and something consuming you. i don't deny that which affects me, but i want to make clear that i do not let those experiences consume me.

i also believe that much good can come from much bad, especially for those of us trying to unlearn the horrific indoctrination of the dominant culture. our rage can inform our passion as much as our passion informs our rage.

much of my life is spent with great joy. the only reason it rarely makes it into these pages is because my ecstasy can rarely be contained within civilized sentiment, and because this project is meant to be one of outrage. find me in a forest or amidst friends if you wish to see joy, and seek not such joy within the framework of this culture, for it is not to be found.

for a feral present and a wild future
for total liberation

DL Lobes



i wake up every morning with the almost unmanageable weight of being amidst a war. metaphorically and literally. physically and internalized. this war is constant; it has stripped everything - plant, animal, even what are commonly seen as non-living - of its autonomy, of its dignity - and my experience has been no difference. i have watched stretches of forest i once played in turned into so many strip malls. i have lost persons dear to me from ailments that only centuries ago were unknown by the inhabitants of this landbase. and as for myself - this war debases me, humiliates me, defiles me on a regular basis. it's perpetuation occurs by my hands, always against my heart's will. my mind is trapped in the crossfire, and it pays dearly.

when you are constantly under attack by an enemy whose onslaught has wrought such grief and loss, what do you do? from birth i have learned to deafen myself to the screams and silence my own, blind myself to the suffering of others and cover the eyes of those around me, and numb myself to the pain and refuse to feel for another's...



...but i cannot bear such guilt. i cannot allow myself any longer to be accomplice to such crimes. i have heard the drums of their war for far too long, and now it is time that i sound my own. for i have heard the screams, seen the suffering, and felt the great absence that a life unfulfilled brings, and it is time to enact vengeance for what we all have endured. we are gathering rage, festering in our bloodlust, and we are warbound.

we are gathering
rage, festering in our
bloodlust, and we are
warbound.

civilization is a funeral procession, a road trampled through wildness with no regard, hacked through by the machete and overturned by the plow. all civilization knows is death, for to be civilized is to be uprooted.

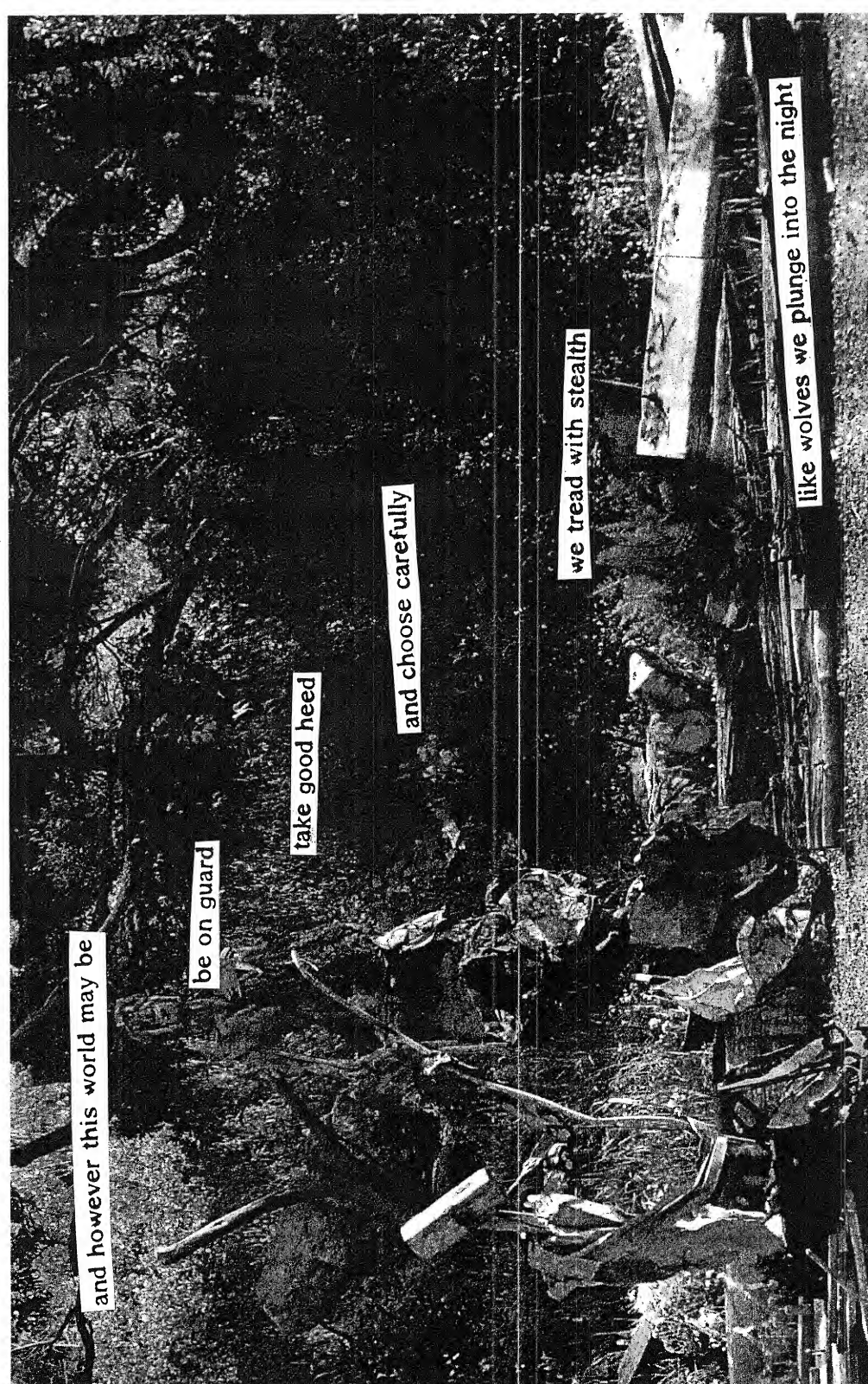
the procession moves forward as we sound the trumpet of the apocalypse, calling it the song of victory, of progress. always looking forward, faces stern. the appearance of order is essential. no tears are to be shed, there is to be no looking back in longing, and to look down in regret is to show weakness.

but it is not weakness we will find beneath our feet if we look down. under the asphalt, the cobblestones, and the clay, where once the mighty forest grew, there are the roots of the weeds that have pushed through. wildness knows no death, unless we take it upon ourselves to uproot it.

and it is not weakness we will find within ourselves if we look inside. under our skin, our sinew, and beyond our ribcage, there is still a heart, and there is still a heartbeat. wildness knows no death, unless we take it upon ourselves to uproot it.



all hail the ones who take from life
without giving back
we can't go on like this
let the dead be dead
all hail the dead



and however this world may be

be on guard

take good heed

and choose carefully

we tread with stealth

like wolves we plunge into the night

"i think we're always creating our own ghosts, always producing things that creep back into our minds when we're alone... and i can't help but to think that when we stop producing our own worthwhile moments, the ghosts fill in the space."

—my big black book of ghosts

i feel my friend's ghost mostly when i fret over my own mortality. when that web of relations we all weave becomes all-too-tangible. her strand went directly to my heart and spirit. its absence is terrifying. i am reminded that i must embrace direct experience over this spectacle that wishes to enmesh me. i must unabashedly thirst for life. i know that for me to truly and fully live, my domestication and the totality of this civilization must be destroyed. the fear, the terror that comes with this thought is something her ghost tells me to laugh at, because my death may already be here. as i move towards a realization of my innermost desires and longings, i am glad that her ghost is with me. i welcome the haunting.

to your memory:

thank you. thank you for sharing a short yet wonderful part of my youth with me. you left an everlasting mark upon my existence. i promise to live my life in a way that would make you happy. you died too young, a victim of a disease that wouldn't even plague you if this civilization hadn't been so pervasive in our lives from the moment we are conceived. i will never forgive this world for taking you from my web of relations. i know you wouldn't want me to. you once wrote that i had a vendetta that was so fierce you were scared i'd actually follow through and come out on top of it all. i hope you were right.



i have been splintered into a thousand pieces, and i do not know if i shall ever be whole. i do not even know what wholeness means, and looking around it does not seem that many others do, either.

—derrick jensen, *a language older than words*



the crowd, the cluster

I hate crowds. I don't like being stuck next to people I don't know in general, but crowds are the worst - all I end up doing is thinking too much, to the point where no matter how happy I was before I entered the crowd, I am hopelessly depressed. Despite the heaving masses, I feel isolated, introverted, and claustrophobic.

The question has been begged in song, "Am I alone in this crowd?"

Crowd - what an ugly looking word, with such an ugly meaning. The American Heritage Dictionary defines it as "a large number of persons gathered," or "to be pressed, or forced tightly together." It also lists it as synonymous with crush and cluster.

Crush is exactly what I feel amidst a herd of humans. Crushed by the Cluster, the overwhelming overpopulating mass, the constant assault of asphyxiation, the suffocating schizophrenia of the city.

The city. The grandiose epoch of the great Moloch, Perlman's Leviathan and its all-consuming perpetuation's epic creation, is the most morose, boring, banal of existences. The people moving to and fro, like so many rats in so many mazes in so many vivisection labs, crowded into so many cages, all in the name of domestication.

The Crowd.
The Cluster.
The City.
The Cages.
The Civilized.

The Crowd.
The Cluster.
The City.
The Cages.
The Civilized.

its not a very popular position to take as an anarchist or an atheist, but i think ghosts are something we need in our lives. i think its hard to grasp the interconnectedness of life unless you experience death... and by that i mean directly experience the loss of a life. not merely observe it, note it, and mourn it, but let the death be felt deep within you - become engrossed with that loss, create a ghost from it, and let that ghost forever walk within you, remind you of your experience, haunt you. i think the experience that hunter-gatherers have with the animals they hunt is as much ritualistic in this manner as it is subsistence - the immersion on a regular basis in the loss of life, reminding them that the relationship between hunter and game must never be forgotten nor abused... but there is no such exchange in the culture of the civilized, and so our phantom procession lurches forward.



civilized life is in fact not living at all - just a long, drawn-out denial of death. we build monuments to our denial through civilization, and its effects have become ghosts in themselves, refusing to pass on, haunting this world, creating even more death.

and when our loved ones die? we plasticize their bodies, interring them forever in concrete and metal, giving them up as ghosts to be feared instead of endeared, rather than allowing their bodies to reenter its exchange with the soil and with other animals, and let their memories be afterlife enough, celebrating this fate that should await us all. what irony, that so much more effort is put into denying death than into living itself. it would seem that the work of the civilized is to make both living and dying impossible.

we are all haunted - by the potential our lives never fulfill and by the acts of this culture in an attempt to eradicate that potential. rather than continuing to let this culture's concept of hauntings dominate us, to drive us into fear, we need to take back the idea of ghosts, to let them motivate us in our struggle.

i've chosen to dedicate all my work under warbound to a beloved friend who died almost two years ago. too many people leave this world, crushed under the weight of civilization, without more than a whisper of what is the immensity of their experience. i won't let that happen to her.

i still can't believe she's dead. everyone close to her knew it would happen sooner than later. she was very open about the disease that labored her breathing and diminished her health constantly... one of our first conversations was about her inevitable early demise, but at 16 the concept of being lost to death didn't carry the weight it does now.

*"when you're 16 you don't know
what forever means.*

when you're 23,

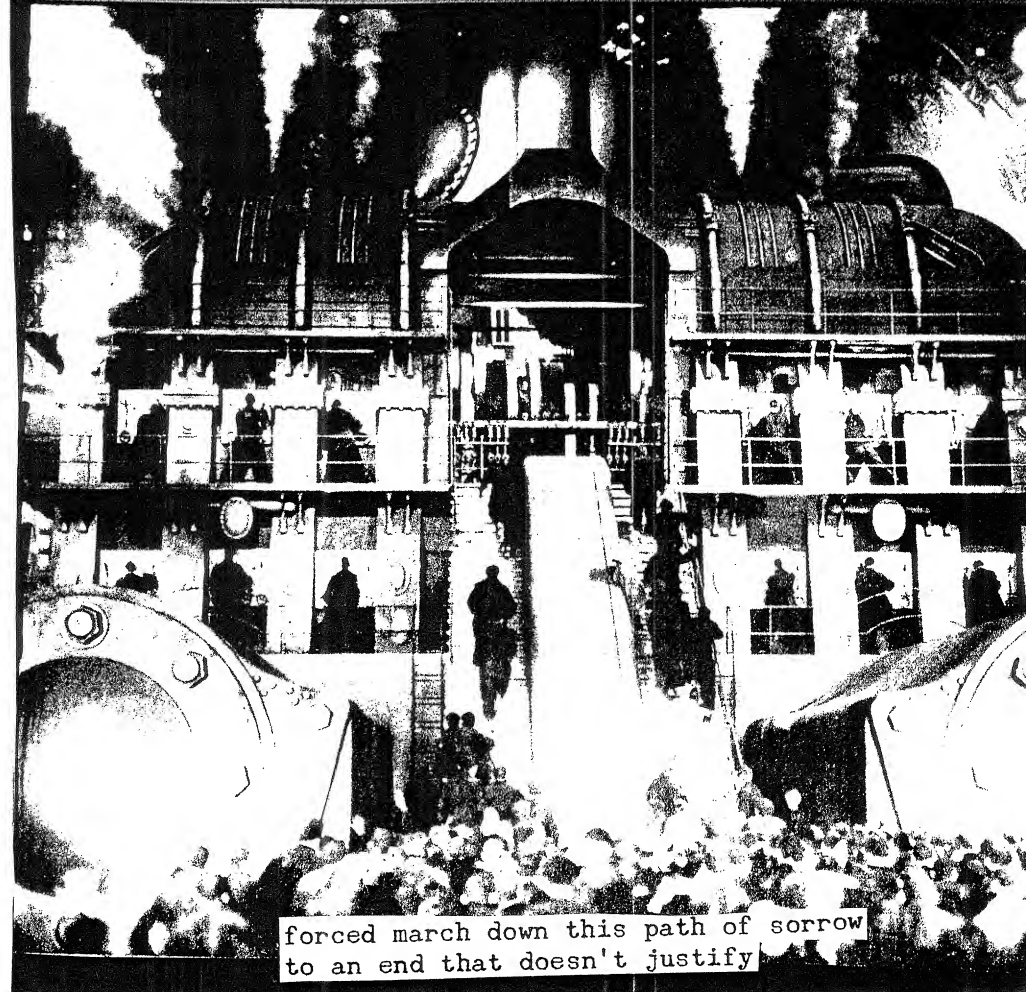
you couldn't be more sorry..."

when our paths first crossed, i was just beginning to clarify the discontent that had been with me since i was much younger. through letters, photographs, and music we constantly exchanged ideas and experiences, and i often found myself and my ideas examined critically yet encouragingly by her. she helped strengthen and develop who i am today in the most positive of ways.

i read her last letter to me when i finally got it, almost 6 months after i had found out about her death. it had been lost in a stack of papers at the house where i had my mail forwarded while i had been on tour. over the years, i had come to learn more about her illness. i witnessed firsthand her pain, her fear, her anxiety - she had told me that worse than the knowledge that she was going to die young was having to wait for that time to come. i know how unhappy she was with what was left of her life before she passed, as she was confined to a hospital increasingly as her condition worsened. she always lamented the boredom and lifelessness of those surroundings.

i'm glad she died before the pain and the dullness got any worse. my sorrow in her passing is primarily in that she didn't get to experience more in her time. nonetheless, it makes me glad that i believe in ghosts.

Each and every living creature is isolated in the crowding of civilization. Connection is discouraged, except of course when connections are plausible for production, and then the connections are unfulfilling, with no opportunity to ever be fulfilled. I'd go so far as to say they aren't even real because the contact is never realized... a faint hum in the static, a ghost in the frequency of what should be a grand song of celebration. Instead, our lives are never tuned quite right... "missed connections" as they say.



forced march down this path of sorrow
to an end that doesn't justify

The frustration of such a situation consumes us, and we implode and explode simultaneously. That's why so many lovers betray their others, or worse live under the shadow of a false love in fear of further loneliness - desires shattered like so many victims of the heart's war left on the battlefield of loss, never to return to the land of the trusting. That's why people gun down their coworkers at office jobs and students at their schools, the survivors returning to the daily grind after refurbishing - "therapy: is what they call it when it happens to people and not machines. That's why chickens peck each other to death and pigs gnaw each others' tails off in factory farms. That's why wars are fought...

The dialogue the domesticators set goes like this:

"...There's just never enough room here - overcrowding - and someone's got to go. My biological drive to keep breathing justifies any action that i take in that effort, and this means you go so i don't have to. I will exploit you. I will cut you down. I will plant you in rows. I will herd and harvest you. I will slaughter you without restraint. I will enslave you. I will push you into the margins, and when I need that space, I will kill you off."

Much to order's displeasure, the humyn spirit just can't accept life this way. Somewhere along the line, the crowding stopped feeling like guidance and started feeling like guillotine. But rather than embrace the rage that should follow such a deception, we retreat to the shadows of despair.

so we surrender to the silence with every notch in the skyline serving as a mass gravemarker, born from broken backs and vapid stares.

and after we've bought the sky and sold the sky and bled the sky, the heavens will not come crashing. the trumpets will not sound. because all of it is a lie. when every clock face can't keep from mocking, when every back can't keep from breaking just keep listening for the angels singing, just keep swallowing what they keep feeding, just keep hoping, just keep bleeding, just keep dying, and never stop believing.

- the power and the glory

anger is fuel. we feel it and we want to do something. hit someone, break something, throw a fit, smash a fist into a wall, tell those bastards. but we are nice people, and what we do with our anger is stuff it, deny it, bury it, block it, hide it, lie about it, medicate it, muffle it, ignore it. we do everything but listen to it.

anger is meant to be listened to. anger is a voice, a shout, a plea, a demand. anger is meant to be respected. why? because anger is a map. anger shows us what our boundaries are. anger shows us where we want to go. it lets us see where we've been and lets us know when we haven't liked it. anger points the way, not just the finger...

anger is meant to be acted upon. it is not meant to be acted out. anger points the direction. we are meant to use anger as fuel to take the actions we need to move where our anger points us. with a little thought, we can usually translate the message that our anger is sending us.

when we feel anger, we are often very angry that we feel anger. damn anger! it tells us we can't get away with our old life any longer. it tells us that old life is dying. it tells us we are being reborn, and birthing hurts. that hurt makes us angry.

anger is the firestorm that signals the death of our old life. anger is the fuel that propels us into our new one. anger is a tool, not a master. anger is meant to be tapped into and drawn upon. used properly, anger is use-full.

sloth, apathy, and despair are the enemy. anger is not. anger is our friend. not a nice friend. not a gentle friend. but a very, very loyal friend. it will always tell us when we have betrayed ourselves. it will always tell us that it is time to act in our own best interests.

anger is not the action itself.

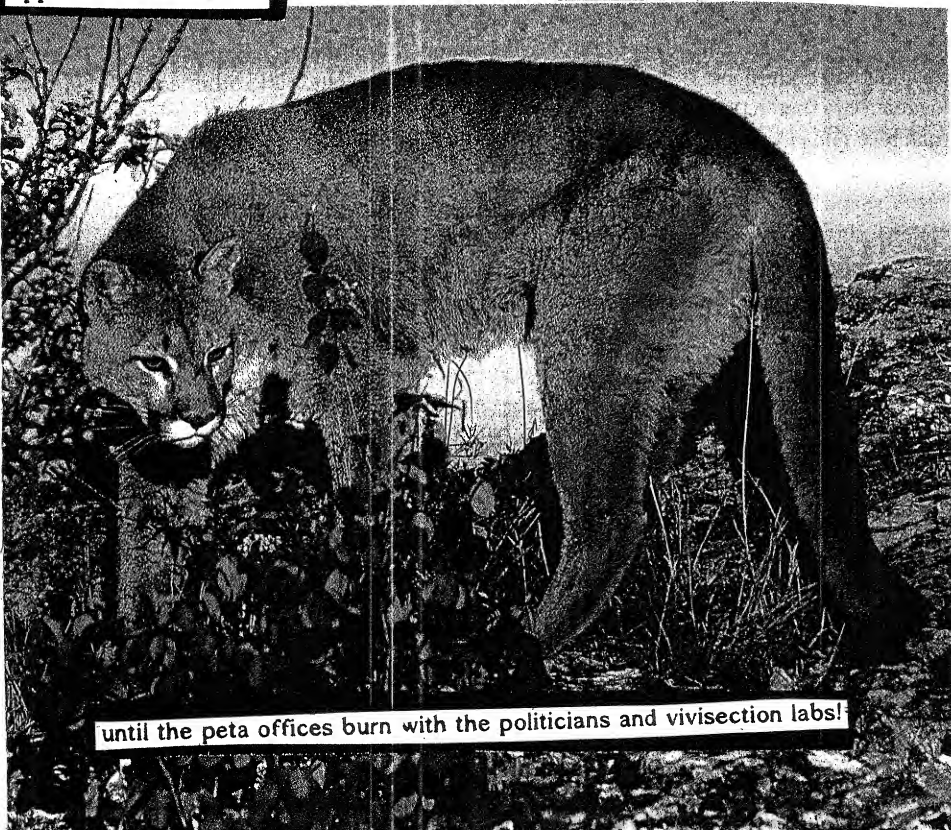
it is action's invitation.

- julia cameron

traditionally, liberationists have chosen compromise for fear of inefficacy, the argument provided on behalf of "the movement" being that their efforts are intrinsic to ours. it's been said that we cannot measure a movement's legitimacy. what i wish to argue is that a movement's effectiveness has very much to do with that movement's end goals, and with that in mind, should we begin to examine our position within the various struggles we have aligned ourselves with? can anything less than resistance to civilization bring about animal liberation? if our desire is truly an uncompromised freedom, we may find our time and efforts terribly misguided by those seeking much, much less than we demand.

it is time for those who truly desire freedom and security for ourselves and our animal relations to be honest with ourselves: the interests and goals of movements that are not willing to demand and act for total liberation are not the interests or goals we seek, and our deference or cooperation is not requisite. our loyalties must lie first and foremost with liberation and nothing less.

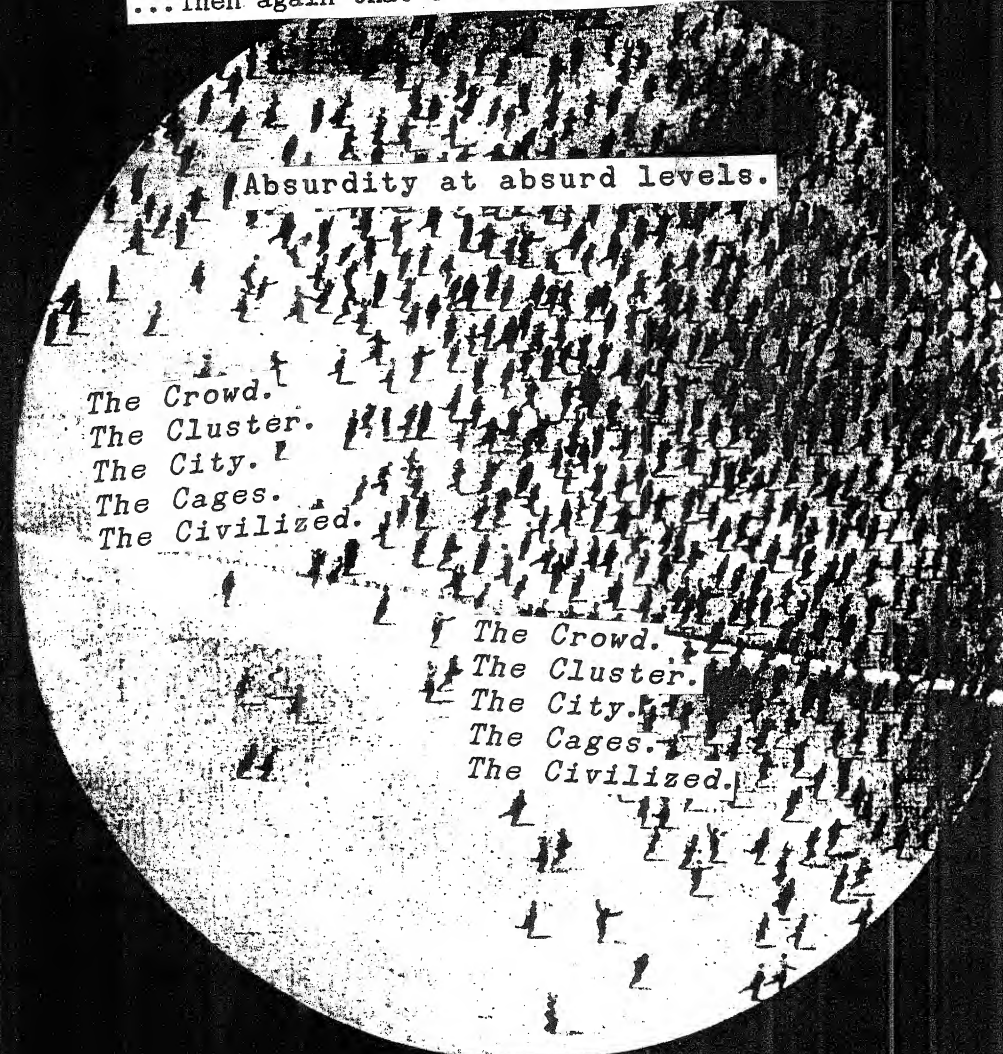
where do we go from this, one might ask? i do not have the answers, i'm merely one voice among many. but to continue to be dishonest with ourselves about our efforts is to further prolong the suffering of each and every facet of our lives, our bioregions, and our animal relations and to further delay the destruction of the entire physical, mental, and emotional infrastructure of domination and its apparatuses of control.



until the peta offices burn with the politicians and vivisection labs!

I refuse to accept the concept that my life (or way of life) takes precedent over anyone or anything else. My biological drive to keep breathing doesn't give me license to wantonly destroy. It's an exercise in absurdity in my eyes to try and remove every other strand in a web that I depend upon in order to survive. It's also absurd that I can write this and instill this in my heart, but continue to participate in that very destruction...

...Then again that's what a clusterfuck is, right?



Isn't it all so terrifyingly isolating?

Of course. I should feel alone in a clusterfuck culture. To acknowledge that the basic drive of what envelops you is determined to undermine any connection you may attain is nothing less than isolating. I've been imbibed at the feet of the most disempowering of teachers. I've been set-up since birth to believe I am alone, despite what primal truths may rest in my heart. In place of community, in place of stimulation, in place of ecstatic experience - this.

"We may now be the possessors of the world's flimsiest identity structure, the products of a prolonged tinkering with ontogenesis -by Paleolithic standards, childish adults."

- Paul Shepard, *Nature and Madness*

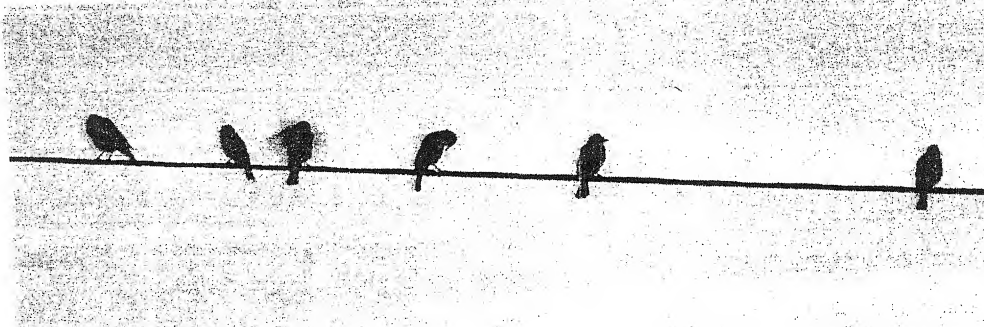
so here i am, a 20-something year old child in a culture run by so many man-children. isolated. alienated. going nowhere but down. i'm curled into a permanent fetal position on a concrete slab when i should be running amongst a forest.

None of us belong here.



unfortunately, the efforts to develop and achieve such goals have been stunted, and in their place stands the failure of the animal rights movement to effectively liberate animals, the human rights movement in the failure to do the same for our species, and the environmental justice movement to do the same for the planet - all the while the figureheads and their organizations are ever-successful in campaigning, lobbying, fundraising, and general politicking - paying lip-service to liberation, but none for the better of anything, with the exception of a few egos and undoubtedly some bank accounts. those who seek total liberation must begin to examine our position within the various struggles we may have aligned ourselves with, for if our desire is truly an uncompromised freedom, we may find our time and efforts terribly misguided by those seeking much, much less than we demand.

that many animal, earth, and total liberationists are frustrated with the compromising of their positions within these movements is no surprise. to put it bluntly, those that seek liberation will always run into the wall of this-or-that ideology that these causes represent, or else they will cede their positions and be absorbed therein. all too often, the latter is occurring. from such positions, these movements co-opt the language and bastardize the concept of liberation to further their own ends (exactly what is peta doing using the term "animal liberation" whilst supporting the sterilization of feral cats and pigeons? one will never know...) and in doing so create a vacuum for truly liberatory dialogue and action, if not worse - one can't help but recall the humane society's recent comments supporting the feds and the general climate of persecution against persons who actually save animals. on these terms our desires are repeatedly stunted, often censored and repressed by our selves, and by doing such a rhetorical (and sometimes literal) victory goes not to liberation, but towards the continuation of a culture that will always demand blood. no amount of reform will ever bring forth liberation, only illusions of it. "bigger cages, longer chains" as the saying goes



some thoughts on liberation

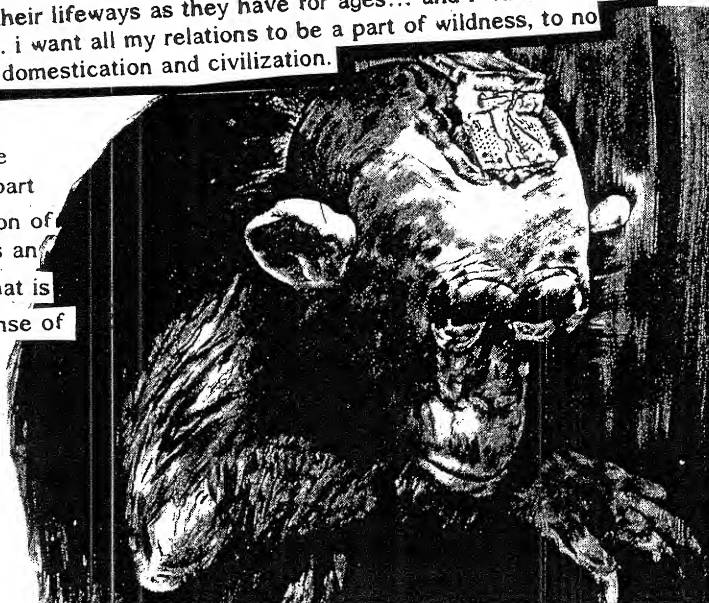
call me impatient, but i cannot wait, even for one single second, for civilization to collapse. that is because each moment that i knowingly and willingly pass by within this massive failure that we know as culture is a moment that i am partially responsible for the mass-murder and mass-torture at the factory farms, vivisection laboratories, zoos, circuses, and anywhere non-human animals are used as mere objects and not within the context of connectedness. for civilization to exist, cruelty, sadism, and carnage must be abound, pervasive, while our disconnection to such atrocities is equally important. i feel as responsible for its perpetuation as those in lab coats.

some of you may already be rushing to my comfort, with lackadaisical reassurances that i "can only do so much" and it's not my fault i was "born into this" and so many of the excuses that are used to protect and reinforce abusive situations by those unwilling to take upon themselves the weight of the situation at hand and get their hands dirty for the sake of the dying. perhaps you wish to convince me that it won't take the destruction of civilization to end this suffering, that i can still make a big difference by being a better, more moral person through my dietary and lifestyle choices, mourning the dead by purchasing "cruelty-free" products and making sure those in positions of power know my outrage by participating in petition and protest on a regular basis. with an unwavering devotion to the cause, i can help those animals less fortunate than humans to gain the same rights that i have...

...but that is exactly what i do not want for animals. i do not want my sisters and brothers in the animal nations to have those rights that i have: the right to die a debased, unhappy, unfulfilled, domesticated creature in service to a culture that will never give anyone or anything liberation. i want them to be able to live wild and free, to practice their lifeways as they have for ages... and i want the same for my fellow humans. i want all my relations to be a part of wildness, to no longer be chained by domestication and civilization.

that even an apocalypse
can be made to seem part
of the ordinary horizon of
expectation constitutes an
unparalleled violence that is
being done to our sense of
reality, to our humanity.

- susan sontag



Our place is elsewhere. Our place is a world of wildness.

By that i mean a world without restrictions or coercion. A world where uninhibited beings exist. Where what exists for its own sake, and in doing so enters a web of relations with the vast and diverse Other. A world without this soul-crushing nothingness. A world where all might have the dignity of a death in some way other than at a desk or on an assembly line, not separated from friends and loved ones but near to them always. A smaller world, not a larger one... its knowing that there is so much more out there that undoubtedly fosters some emptiness within us, the sacred mystery of "what else?" stripped from us by the forcefulness of science.

A world of wildness is a world of interconnectedness, of communion. It is a world that the written word cannot contain. This interaction, this engagement, does not translate into the confines of domesticated thought. It is life, living. If we are to make it out of

The Crowd.
The Cluster.
The City.
The Cages.
The Civilized.

we will do it only by transforming the dullness and emptiness that has colonized territory within us and by embracing the rage and indignation of the wild within that even now pitches battles against our domestication.

intoxication and civilization

from enslavement to
obliteration within the
addiction culture

"There is no more profound way
of understanding the course of
history than in terms of this effort

to escape from one's own 'sweating self' and to
experience even temporary states of euphoria or
relief of discomfort regardless of the cost."

- Nathan S. Kline

From its earliest inceptions, sedentary life brought with it a drudging misery for its inhabitants, and with such misery quickly arose the need to placate the unruly and desensitize the weary. As social beings, the disassociated conventions of civilized life have never come naturally, and these impositions into and upon our lives have induced massive, collective trauma. The infrastructure of civilization surrounds, envelops, and teaches us to embody its qualities. It's modern totality is the magnum opus of the domestication set out upon less than a dozen millennia ago, and we are it's equally insane offspring, each generation's pathology more dysfunctional than the last. What began over ten thousand years ago when we began domesticating plants and animals to meet food demands, and from there led to the deforestation of the lands of Mesopotamia and beyond in order to meet the needs of agriculture, what meant the forcing of other peoples off the land wanted, has continued into the present today. We bind ourselves to its unreasonable and unsustainable demands, suffering a commitment to a lifestyle that demands constant production and expansion through ever-increasing and deepening levels of exploitation and an unwavering devotion to this culture as not only beneficial and enlightening, but the only way in which our species can survive. As demands increase and complicate, so do our techniques and our technologies. Exploitation is no longer enough, for we are no longer just consuming. We need hyper-exploitation for hyper-consumption. Our concept of Progress only serves to reinforce what Derrick Jensen simplified as the process of converting the living to the dead.²

Our every relationship is framed by through coercion. In the absence of wildness, our desire for direct experience is left unfulfilled. In its place, the hollowness of modernity: a psychically and ecologically barren monoculture of hyper-consumption makes a pathetic attempt, if any, to replace the engagement our species

"work is the source of nearly all the misery in the world: almost any evil you'd care to name comes from working or from living in a world designed for work."

INSOME CONSUME CONSUME CONSUME
- bob black the abolition of work

work is unhealthy physically, mentally, and emotionally. it disconnects us and imprisons us. work has devalued our relationships with one another as it has our relationship to the land and our animal relations. it matters not whether the activity is done in the field or in the office, at the vivisection laboratory or the stock exchange, what it all boils down to is the production of death, often far-removed but always literal. work creates false demands, ultimatums that we break ourselves under. addicted to this culture, work is our search for the one fix that will cure us. it will never come, because the demands of such an addiction never end. we need better grades, more letters of referral, more scholarships, a better graduate thesis, more qualities employers desire, more raises, more savings, more money in the market, more investing in order to provide more investments... forget the fable of the tortoise and the hare, because slow and easy does not win the race. we are now the fully-realized hare, and we have no time to nap. this race is a suicidal compulsion. is it any wonder why in our later years we need 'rest homes' so that we may again take things slow and steady? sadly, by the time that we do come full circle to the ever-applicable moral of the aescopica of our childhood, we are far too late in life to benefit from its lesson. we die, the conversion complete. disgusting, indeed. our last days, hours, minutes, and seconds are spent pathetically grasping for the life we never lived, for that one fix we were never able to get.



An anarchist world is a world of liberatory reality, of daily engagement and constant stimulation, with rewarding experiences and real relations a world without domestication or civilization, without this web of boredom, depression, docility and misery.

notes

¹ Nathan S. Kline, forward to Robert S. de Ropp, *Drugs and the Mind* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1957), viii.

² Paraphrased from *Endgame, Volumes I: The Problem of Civilization*

³ Crimethinc Ex-Workers Committee, "The End of the World" in *Harbinger* (issue 5, 2002), p. 1.

⁴ Perlman, Fredy. *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan* (Detroit: Black And Red, 1983), p. 208.

⁵ David T. Courtwright, *Forces Of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 92.

⁶ Zerzan, John, *Elements Of Refusal* (Colombia, MO: C.A.L. Press, 2006), p. 127.

⁷ Contact xriotfagx@riseup.net for additional information.

⁸ Glendinning, Chellis, *My Name Is Chellis And I'm In Recovery From Western Civilization* (Boston: Shambhala, 1994), p. 98.

⁹ From Berman's *The ReEnchantment of the World* (Cornell University Press, 1981)

¹⁰ *idem*, p. 98.

¹¹ *ibid*.

¹² *ibid*.

¹³ Fromm, Erich, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, 1994), p. 17.

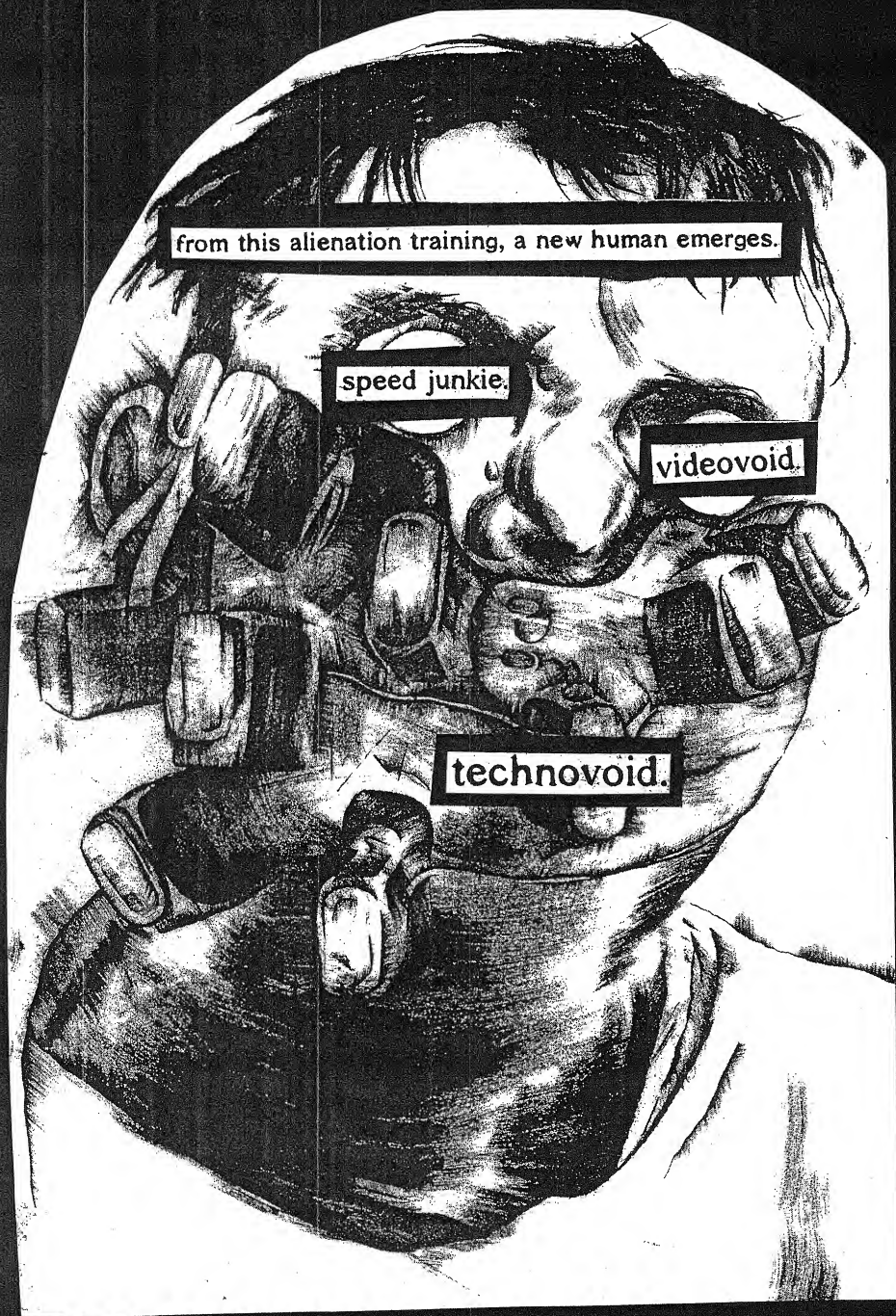
¹⁴ *idem*, p. 139.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 138.

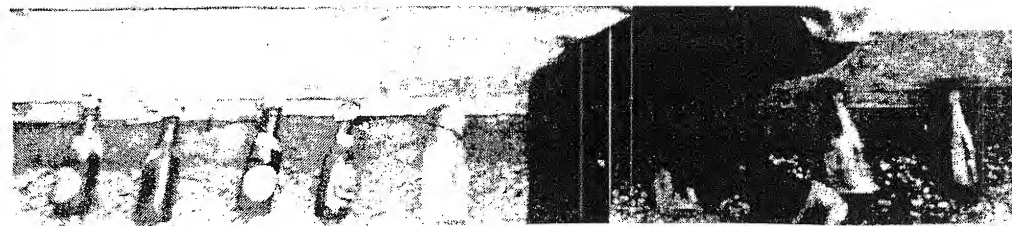
demands. Lacking the balance of a sustainable and natural experience, civilization deals with extremes, such as the bounce between over and under-stimulation, neither one satisfying or healthy for us in any way. In place of the forager's quest, we stand slack-jawed in the aisles of supermarkets (how many times have you heard someone say in those aisles, "there's just too much to choose from, I wish this were easier?"), a place where even the "original" hits of pop radio are replaced with tamed, detail-less muzak, as is the warmth and light of the sun with the eerie glow of fluorescents. The conversation around the campfire is relegated to rare and novelty occurrences, if ever, as we take to replacing emotion with "emoticons," and even the voices of our friends and families over telephone lines are becoming more and more often replaced with the beeping and buzzing of text message notifications. It was once written that "our generation will go to its grave shouting its last words into a cell phone,"³ but this dying world may not hear our screams. It has become frighteningly more realistic that we will go to our deaths silently, pressing keys and holding the "send" button.

the spectacle's social function is the concrete manufacture of **alienation**.
guy debord, *society of the spectacle*

We are truly surrounded/alone. Our social networking profiles boas legions of online friends, but the reality is we are isolated as we click our way through pseudo-relationships - it's not just quantity over quality, it is, like all of domestication, the abolition of quality itself. We surround ourselves with techno-comforts whilst prisoners ~~to the~~ increasingly standardized and dehumanized, our experiences overwhelmingly clustered yet simultaneously crushingly separated by walls physical and emotional. Fredy Perlman passed away before the permeation of the internet, cell phones, and so much of what shapes the technological ghost limb of many in this culture today, but the writing had been on the wall long before these "advances," and his words ring truer today than ever before when he wrote that "civilization is a humanly meaningless web of unnatural constraints."⁴ It is in our ever widening disconnect from reality and its pervasiveness of boredom and teeter-totter of over and under-stimulation that the misery of this culture expands into every facet of our existence.



-jerry mander, in the absence of the sacred: the failure of technology and the survival of the indian nations

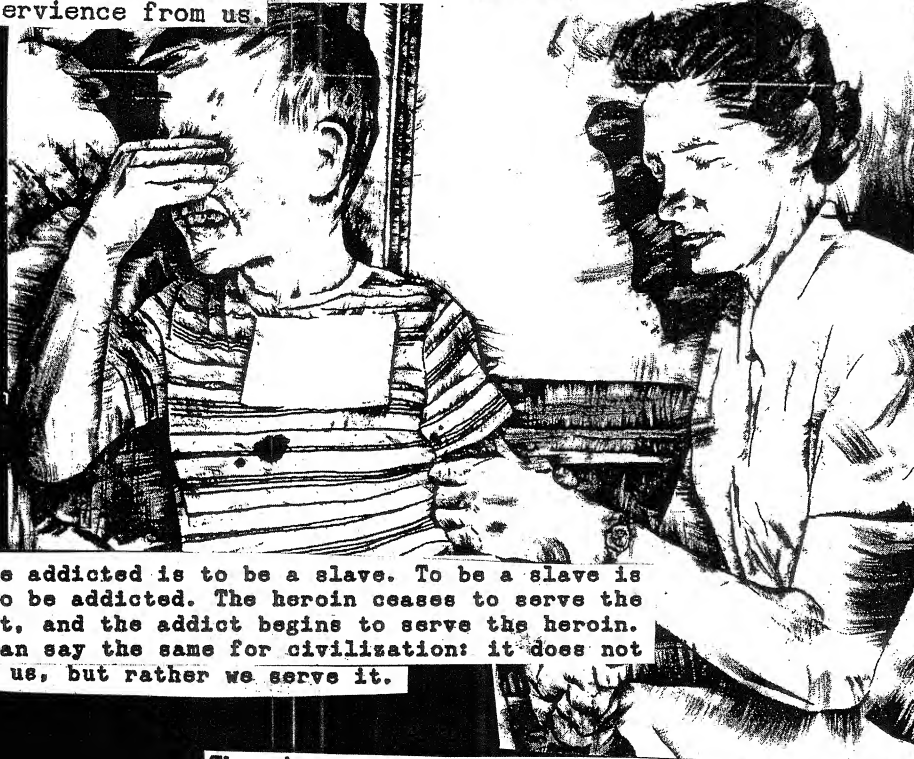


Just as the environmental movement will never save any ecosystem, just as the worker's movement will never abolish work, a culture of false and/or detached pleasure will never bring about a participatory experience. There never was and never will be balm in Gilead, to borrow from the western mythical tradition. Sadly, the stranglehold of addiction was in place long before our struggle to undo it, and it is to no surprise that anarchist communities suffer as much as any other from the pitfalls of Addiction Culture, amongst the many other undesirable aspects of civilization. What is surprising, however, has been the absence (and in some cases removal) of dialogue around the subject, particularly within the context of resistance to civilization and the unlearning of domestication. As Glendinning showed, denial is a central part of the addict pathology. Until we acknowledge the major deficiency of praxis our resistance suffers from by perpetuating Addiction Culture, our opposition will continue to falter, stumbling drunkenly towards abject failure, towards the realization of domestication and civilization: extinction.

As with so many of the problems facing those hoping to overcome and outlive civilization, this undertaking will not be easy, and I make no claim to have all or even any answers to this problem. I can only say that the damage wrought by this culture is deep and manifests itself widely, and the rewilding of our planet and our selves must go as deep as civilization's despoliation. Our hopes for a life engaged and enmeshed within actual experiences lay within an attack on the totality of civilization and nothing less. The only way we will achieve total liberation from this culture is by tearing out every last vestige of the malicious roots of domestication from within our communities and ourselves. Anarchists purport to be fighting against the world that creates such wretchedness while seeking, building, and sustaining communities free of the stifling woe that is necessary for civilization to continue and that Addiction Culture numbs us to. To end oppression of all kinds, we must confront it by any means necessary and must also be willing to look critically at, speak openly about, and fight vigorously against such an omnipresent component of oppression, simultaneously seeking to heal, working to support on another in our recovery.

Addiction Culture provides the context necessary for placation and pacification, to further disempower us, to more easily break us. Under its enchantment, we perpetuate a cycle of docility and destruction. That is why it is called addiction.

And that is why we must resist Addiction Culture's promises of a lull in the torrent of civilized misery. Some may argue, as Courtwright has, that "the use of drugs to cope with fatigue and obliterate misery is in many ways a byproduct of civilization itself,"¹⁵ but it increasingly seems more feasible that Addiction Culture is not an unintended consequence, but rather an integral and vital part of the domesticating process. Without civilization addiction culture would not exist, but just as importantly without addiction culture, civilization could not exist. Relief from domestication through civilization has always been the mythology handed to those who would otherwise resist. The fix, whatever it may be, has always been just around the corner, requiring just another act of subservience from us.



"To be addicted is to be a slave. To be a slave is to be addicted. The heroin ceases to serve the addict, and the addict begins to serve the heroin. We can say the same for civilization: it does not serve us, but rather we serve it."

There's something desperately wrong with that."
- Derrick Jensen

Whether bombarded or deprived, the terror has started to blend into a painful dullness, and we search desperately for comfort, for euphoria, for anything that tells us we are actually alive. At every turn, our quest for connection finds itself funneled into ever-isolating and unfulfilling activities - escapes that replace outlets for the type of ecstatic energy life should create, diverting our desires and replacing them with false engagement, framing our relationship to such experiences originally through the habitual use of intoxicants and now through nearly every mediated aspect of civilization.

This undercurrent developed with the rise of domestication, deepening and strengthening with the onset of the enveloping hopelessness of the first cities. As David T. Courtwright so keenly observed in *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World*:

"Humans evolved as hunter-gatherers in itinerant bands. After the Neolithic Revolution, most of them lived as peasants in crowded, oppressive, and disease-ridden societies. The misery and grinding poverty that were the lot of 90 percent of humanity in the early modern world go far toward explaining why tobacco and other novel drugs became objects of mass consumption. They were unexpected weapons against the human condition, newfound tools of escape from the mean prison of everyday existence."⁵

The once-free were no longer so. Trapped inside, the now-broken were under a constant barrage of fear the fierce coercion of the Big Man, the uncertainty of early agricultural food production, even the water that was once trusted to sustain was poisoned, diseased. It was no mere accident that the use of intoxicants grew rapidly into regular inoculations. In fact, inoculation is often what one intoxicant provided, as Bert L. Vallee discussed in *Alcohol in the Western World: A History*, his June 1998 Scientific American article:

"In the context of contaminated water supply, ethyl alcohol may indeed have been mother's milk to a nascent Western civilization. Beer and wine were free of pathogens. And the antiseptic power of alcohol, as well as the natural acidity of wine and beer, killed many pathogens when the alcoholic drinks were diluted with the sullied water supply."

As civilization expanded and complicated, so too did its connection to intoxicants and our dependency upon them. The coming of the industrial age only served to increase demands of precision and timeliness that weighed down those laborers chained (sometimes literally) to the engines of production. Concerning the constantly rising levels of alcoholism amongst workers in the early 19th century, Zerzan notes that this addiction "was an obvious register of strain and alienation, of the inability to cope with the burden of daily life."⁶ Be it social control or survival, the relationship was there. Domestication and intoxication became inseparable, one augmenting the other - a vicious cycle that so suitably illustrates the functions of both.

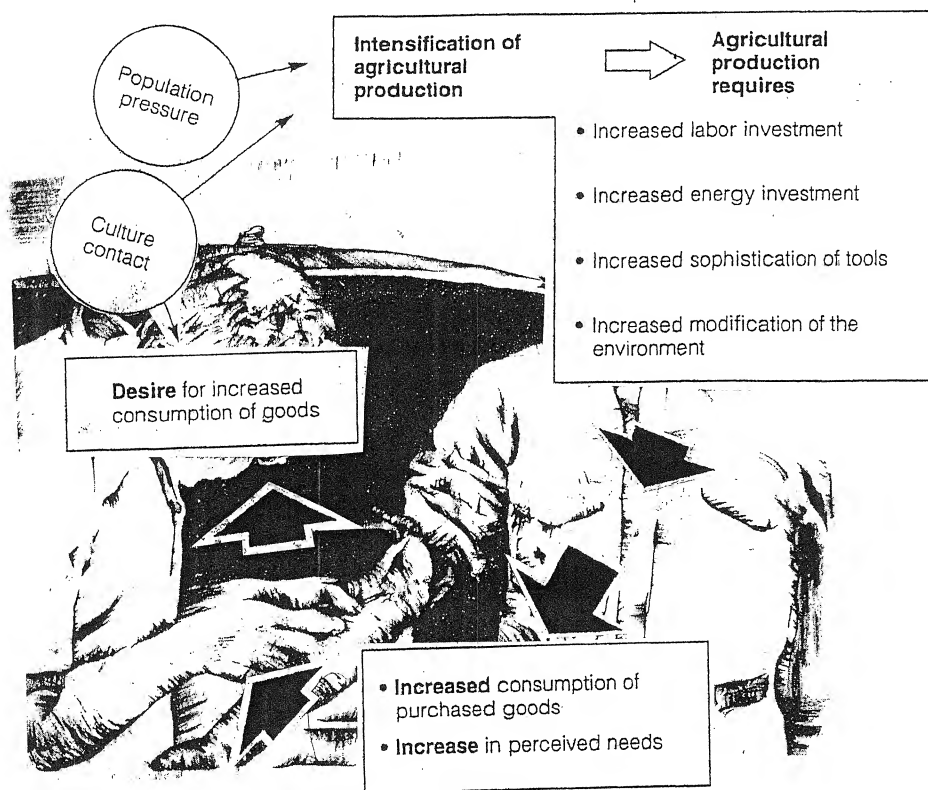


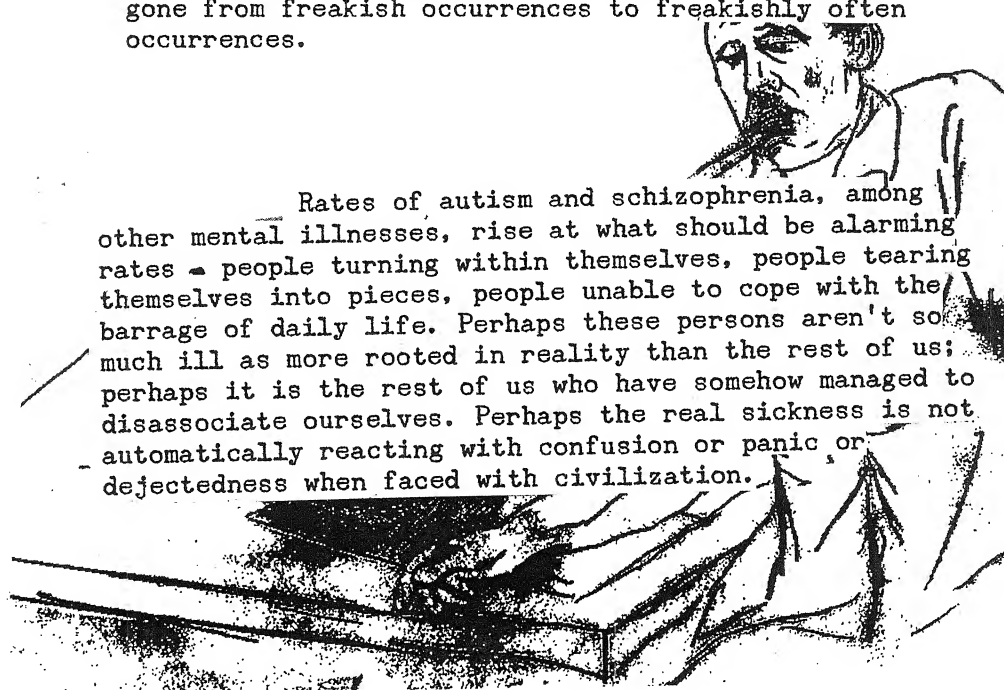
Figure 1

A model of the vicious cycle of agricultural Intensification and increases in perceived needs.

Not that our search for reprieve, however artificial, is condemnable, as the temperance and prohibition ideologies would have us believe (their intoxication being moral absolutism). Rather, such a search is only expected of a creature deprived and cut off. Erich Fromm wrote in *Escape From Freedom* that, "to feel completely alone and isolated leads to mental disintegration just as physical starvation leads to death."¹³ All animals need engagement and without it the need for tranquilization quickly follow in hopes of survival. Courtwright again points to the confinement of domesticated life when he writes, "species seek and consume intoxicants in the wild, but they do so more often and more compulsively under conditions of captivity."¹⁴ One can reflect upon the terrifying experiences of those confined in cages, from vivisection labs to psych wards to schools to Super Max prisons. Many of the more literal hostages of this culture die, whether physically, mentally, or emotionally, before their captors can administer all the appropriate tests/diagnosis/degrees/sentences - often from their implacable misery. Put simply, life is impossible without stimuli. Biologically, humans (and again, many other beings) just don't survive under such denied circumstances in other words, even within its own scientific reasoning, we are at odds with civilization.

Our participation within this culture is driving us absolutely insane. We see the pathology playing out all around us the news stories of people "snapping" have gone from freakish occurrences to freakishly often occurrences.

Rates of autism and schizophrenia, among other mental illnesses, rise at what should be alarming rates - people turning within themselves, people tearing themselves into pieces, people unable to cope with the barrage of daily life. Perhaps these persons aren't so much ill as more rooted in reality than the rest of us; perhaps it is the rest of us who have somehow managed to disassociate ourselves. Perhaps the real sickness is not automatically reacting with confusion or panic or defectedness when faced with civilization.



Attraction to repeated trauma:

Easter Island. Mesopotamia. Maya. Rome. Anasazi.

Waterloo Creek. Wounded Knee. The Great Purge.
The Holocaust. My Lai. Darfur.

American Bison.

Passenger Pigeon.

Bali Tiger.

Northern Spotted Owl.

Mexican Grizzly Bear.

Time after time.

Failure after failure.

Over

and over

again.

Forever and ever into oblivion.

Civilization is the culture of unrelenting trauma, its inhabitants helpless addicts seeking refuge from excruciating distress.

"Alcohol has been around since the beginning of civilization. In fact, people loved alcohol so much that they forgot their nomadic ways and decided to settle down, just so they could grow the grains necessary to make beer. Just think: if it weren't for alcohol, we'd still be wandering around pitching tents every night."

- Drinkfocus.com, a website whose "aim is to empower consumers through providing information that may help in the development of informed decisions."

Intoxication Culture is defined as a "set of institutions, behaviors, and mindsets around consumption of drugs and alcohol" by the author of *Towards a Less Fucked Up World: Sobriety and Anarchist Struggle*.⁷ To be clear, Intoxication Culture is not the same as intoxication itself. As mentioned earlier, many prehistoric (or is it pre-hysteric?) foraging people have, and their modern descendants continue to carry, knowledge of intoxicating plants and substances. The difference between an individual experience and our habitude is just that: what for the primal person is an individualized, conditional moment is for the civilized a compulsion. I have chosen to use the term *Addiction Culture* to expand and extend this concept to include other psychoactive substances, the pharmaceuticals that are pushed by mental and other conventional health industries, the aforementioned dependence upon technological mediation, and in fact the whole of domesticated existence.

In *My Name is Chellis and I'm in Recovery From Western Civilization*, Chellis Glendinning writes, "As an outgrowth of trauma, addiction is an attempt to confront the pain that lies at the heart of the traumatic experience."⁸ Elsewhere, she cites Morris Berman when he delved even deeper into the core of the matter:

"Addiction, in one form or another, characterizes every aspect of industrial society... Dependence on alcohol (food, drugs, tobacco...) is not formally different from dependence on prestige, career achievement, world influence, wealth, the need to build more ingenious bombs, or the need to exercise control over everything."⁹

Glendinning was one of the first to recognize not only the trauma of civilization and its relationship to literal addiction, but the similarities between how addictive behavior and civilization are rationalized. She identified the major characteristics of addiction as "an out-of-control, often aimless, compulsion to fill the lost sense of belonging, integrity, and communion"¹⁰ which is "shielded from awareness by denial: pretending everything is normal, not admitting pain or vulnerability,"¹¹ followed by "an attraction to repeated trauma."¹² Let us explore these concepts now.

An out-of control, often aimless, compulsion:

The entire natural world shudders beneath the load that our culture has created. Our entire lifeway - from our food acquisition to our social structures - has asked more from the natural world than it has ever been able to provide. At every rejection of our demands, we have thus forced our will upon the planet. We have desertified once-beautiful wild lands for our food staples: wheat, rice, soy, corn, and so on. We have thrust our drills deep within the earth to extract its black blood, and we have nearly bled her dry so that our daily activities continue. We have dredged the oceans, nearly wiping out all large sea mammals.

We have blown the tops off mountains. We kill billions upon billions of land animals in factory farms and slaughterhouses. We've dammed (or is it damned? the answer is most likely both) the mightiest rivers for even more power. More food, more power... we constantly extract at insanely exploitative levels so that our culture, one of what we perceive as convenience, might survive. In turn, we have spread famine, poverty, disease, and every facet of destruction thinkable and some unthinkable. We've even created weapons that in moments can undo billions of years of planetary development, leaving a scorched wasteland as our only legacy: a vicious cycle of rapacious consumption and incomprehensible desecration.

Denial:

"We cannot go back."

"We can change the bad things about this and keep the good things."

"It's not my problem. It's not OUR problem."

"We'll find a new way to make things work without it falling apart"

"You are being pessimistic."

"It's too late. There is nothing we can do about it now."

"Where would we even begin if we did want to stop?"

CHRIST.

"We can't take something this big down."

IT'S
WORSE
THAN WE
THOUGHT.

"It was here way before us."

"I don't even want to think about this."

"You are the one who lives in a fantasy world."

... Is there any doubt about the depths of our refusal to accept the reality of our situation?

Introducing the Tiny Happy Pill: The Serenity™ Mood Enhancer

Just imagine - a mood enhancer that can change your life for the better and has absolutely NO known negative side effects.

This is what Serenity will do for you.

Serenity customers typically see results in 1-3 weeks. That is all it takes. You will know within YOUR FIRST BOTTLE if Serenity is for you.

We invite you to try a bottle of Serenity. If you are not satisfied, we'll give you your money back.

on the eve of the end
as the world around us burns
the ashes shall rain
somehow we still beg
"give us a sign"